

Alcohol and Other Drug Use During Pregnancy

When you are pregnant, or planning to become pregnant, the safest option is to not drink alcohol at all. Drinking alcohol during pregnancy puts your baby at risk of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, also known as FASD. FASD is an umbrella term used to describe the range of disabilities caused by prenatal exposure to alcohol. It is the leading known cause of developmental disability in children, and includes lifelong physical, learning and behavioural disabilities.

Similar to drinking alcohol while pregnant, taking drugs during pregnancy or while breastfeeding may harm your baby. This includes prohibited drugs but could also include the misuse of prescribed or over the counter drugs.

For more information about FASD, the use of alcohol and other drugs (substance use) during pregnancy or while breastfeeding, and where to find help, visit the resources and websites listed below.

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD)

For information on FASD and the effects it can have on your baby's health, see:

- [Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder](#) (HealthLinkBC File #38e)
- [Fetal alcohol syndrome](#)
- [Alcohol Effects on a Fetus](#)
- [Drinking Alcohol When You're Pregnant](#)

Substance Use During Pregnancy

For more information about the use of alcohol and other drugs during pregnancy visit:

- [Pregnancy and Alcohol Use](#) (HealthLinkBC File #38d)
- [Using Drugs During Pregnancy](#)

Smoking During Pregnancy

For more information on smoking during pregnancy visit:

- [Smoking and Second Hand Smoke During Pregnancy](#)
- [Quitting Smoking and Avoiding Smoke during Pregnancy](#)
- [Smoking: Problems with Pregnancy](#)

Substance Use While Breastfeeding

For resources related to breastfeeding and substance use, see [Breastfeeding](#) (HealthLinkBC File #70).

Support and Counselling

Individual, family, and small group counselling is available to people of all ages who are directly or indirectly affected by alcohol and other drug use. You can call the 24-hour BC Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service at 604-660-9382 or toll-free at 1-800-663-1441. For information about mental health and substance use, visit [HeretoHelp](#).

For additional mental health and substance use support in your area, search HealthLinkBC's [FIND Services and Resources Directory](#).

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For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles or your local public health unit. For non-emergency health information and advice in B.C. visit www.HealthLinkBC.ca or call **8-1-1** (toll-free). For the deaf and hard of hearing, call **7-1-1**. Translation services are available in more than 130 languages on request.